

**Town of Foxborough
Conservation Commission Minutes
April 8, 2013**

Members Present: Robert Boette (Chair), Allan Curtis (Vice Chair), Eric Nelson (Clerk), Douglas Davis, Judith Johnson and James Marsh

Members Absent: Valerie Marshall

Staff Present: Jane Sears Pierce, Conservation Manager, and Lee Ann Tavares, Secretary

Others Present: See attached sign-in sheet

Meeting Opened

Bob Boette opened the meeting, held in the Andrew A. Gala Jr. Meeting Room, at 7:00 p.m.

Discussion with Mr. Ron Booth

Mr. Ron Booth had been invited to the meeting to talk about his daily walks at Cocasset River Park, as documented in a diary that he had sent to the Commission. He described the area and the wildlife he had encountered including frogs, tadpoles and turtles. He noted concern about the grass creeping down the beach which could negatively affect the turtle's nesting habitat. He also mentioned the park's overgrown shrubbery. He explained that he would like to restore the park's natural habitat and create a wildlife sanctuary with nature trails and educational signage. Vandalism and ways to curb it was discussed. Mr. Booth was also interested in conducting a detailed analysis of the park's turtle population including the turtle species, their nesting areas, where they come from and where they go. Jane added that she was interested in developing a land stewardship program for volunteers who were interested in helping the Commission with conservation property management and trail maintenance.

Mr. Booth asked about the fence, surrounding the beach area. Judi stated that the Dog Park's lawsuit resulted in a court ordered settlement agreement that required the removal of the fence before the area could be used. Jane stated she would like to keep the fence, since she believed that it helped to protect the turtle's nesting habitat by keeping predators out of the area. Judi explained that although nothing had been done about the settlement's requirement to take the fence down, it would need to be resolved before the area could be used by the public. Allan questioned whether the actual decision was legal, since it created a change in zoning. He said that he would speak to the Zoning Board to determine whether the decision was legal and if it was illegal, get it tossed out. Bob and Jane planned to meet Mr. Booth at the park on Wednesday for a site visit at 1:00.

East Belcher Road Compost Facility

Mr. Bob Swanson, Highway Department, attended the meeting and reported that most of the phragmites had been removed from the site. Jane, who had visited the site earlier in the day, reported that the berm had been covered with plastic and loam. Judi said it would be OK to seed it with any New England wetland native seed mix. She asked Jane to get back to Mr. Swanson with the names of companies that carried this type of seed mix.

Mr. Swanson stated that the berm would be finished on the following day and that he was going to have Bay Colony stake out the micro pools. He explained that during the construction of the restoration area, the site's water was being diverted through a temporary swale they had created.

General Discussion

NRRC - Judi informed the Commission that she had attended the recent NRRC meeting where they had discussed the reservoir's current high water levels. During the meeting, Sheila Warner indicated that they received complaints from the same people every year. She said that when they had complained, the water level was actually 10 inches below the historical high level.

Judi explained that keeping the water high during the spring provides water quality benefits, adding that currently, every board is in the dam. She suggested finding money to do a lake management plan, which would help the NRRC to be more proactive, i.e.: if a storm was forecast, perhaps a board could be taken out of the dam to prevent flooding damage. She said that the NRRC has funds available for such a plan. Judi asked Jane to give her copies of Bill Hocking's historical recordings of reservoir water levels (taken at the dam) to give to the NRRC.

Vernal Pool Workshop - Judi stated that more publicity was needed to increase participation in this event. She suggested putting an article in the newspaper, including a photo of previous events, and that information should also be sent to the Scouts. She informed the Commission that she had been working with Shannon Sylvia of Foxboro Cable Access to create an educational video about vernal pools. Jane will present the workshop on Saturday the 20th from 10:00 to 12:00 and will also be giving a slide presentation for the Garden Club on May 1, 2013.

Lincoln Hill Property, Oak Street - Judi asked Jane to get an attested vote for the Lincoln Hill Camp acquisition from the Town Clerk, so they could file it with the deed.

Garrett Spillane Lot - Jane was asked to forward copies of the Commission's previous Garrett Spillane property letters to the Board of Selectmen to Judi, who will then draft another letter about the property for the BoS.

New Filings Distributed to Commissioners

- Notice of Intent – Foxborough High School

Meeting Adjourned

Motion was made by Allan Curtis to adjourn; seconded by Douglas Davis. **Vote: 6-0-0**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Nelson, Clerk

Draft minutes submitted by Lee Ann Tavares: 4/10/13

Reviewed by Jane Pierce: 9/10/13

Approved by Commission: 10/7/13

Documents, Not Referenced Above, Reviewed During Meeting

Attached Documents:

1. Agenda, 4/08/13
2. Meeting Sign In Sheet

Location of Other Documents:

3. Manager's Report, filed in Manager's Report binder in Conservation Commission's office.
4. Referenced projects' documents: please see Conservation Commission's project file